

Language Anxiety among Jordanian Postgraduate Students at Yarmouk University

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Abstract

This research is designed to investigate language anxiety among Jordanian master's students of English language at Yarmouk University. It is directed by two research questions: To what extent do selected variables age, socio-economic status, and speaking ability predict the language anxiety levels among Jordanian master's students at Yarmouk University? and which factors do students believe contribute to anxiety? This research used an adopted version by Aida (1994) of the FLCAS instrument proposed by Horwitz, Horwitz & Cope (1986) to measure anxiety levels. It is recommended that teachers, educators and educational policy makers pay more attention to the problems of foreign language anxiety, especially in speaking skills, and to tailor new innovative methodologies and strategies that can reduce anxiety levels.

Keywords: Language Anxiety, Jordanian master's students, Quantitative Research

1- Introduction

Anxiety is considered as a psychological state in which the person is more likely to experience uneasiness, tension, nervousness and dread than any other situations. Anxiety is considered as one of the effective factors in learning second or foreign language (Brown, 2007). It is the most powerful predictor on the students' performance among the affective factors (Liu & Huang, 2011).

Furthermore, Gardner, Tremblay, and Masgoret (1997) investigated the relationship between foreign language anxiety among different affective variables and language performance to declare that foreign language anxiety was ranked as the highest factor which negatively correlated with language achievement. More recently, Olivares-Cuhat (2010) also investigated the relative important of various learner variables such as cognitive, meta cognitive and affective variables on foreign or second language performance to assert over again that foreign language anxiety is the important factor in learning foreign or second languages. Consequently, Al-Shboul, Ahmad, Nordin, and Rahman (2013) have conducted a comprehensive review to conclude that foreign language anxiety not only affects the students' learning process and outcomes but also the negative relationship between foreign language anxiety and achievement seems to vary according to specific skill. However, Arabic learners who learn English as a foreign language have rarely been investigated. The differences vary according to the target language and writing system. Thus, Arabic learners who learn English as a foreign language is in dire need to be investigated.

The main sources of language anxiety can be categorized into two: (1) personal sources, and (2) interpersonal sources (Yang, 2005). Among the main personal sources of anxiety are learners' perceptions of themselves, learners' beliefs, self-concept, self-esteem, and self-confidence. Interpersonal sources would include communication apprehension, competitiveness, and teacher-student interaction (Yang, 2005). Though these are perceived as two distinct and different categories, there are some points where personal and interpersonal interact and intersect, such as competitiveness and test anxiety. Learners' perceptions of themselves have been suggested as an important source of anxiety in the foreign language classroom (Foss & Reitzel, 1988; MacIntyre, Noels, & Clément, 1997). As a personal source of language anxiety, several research studies reported that levels of learners' self-esteem was highly associated with language anxiety (Bailey, 1983; Horwitz et al., 1986; Young, 1990, 1992). For examples, Foss & Reitzel (1988) found that anxious students who were anxious during class communication were more inclined to have low self-esteem and that some learners perceived themselves to be less worthy than others or that communication was less effective than their classmates. In addition, Horwitz (1989) suggested that the students' assessments of themselves could be highly associated with language anxiety. Her research indicated that learners with a more positive self-concept showed lower levels of anxiety than others with a more negative self-concept.

From the researcher's observation, the Jordanian students in particular; still have difficulties in communicative skills that could be attributable to anxiety. Although, little research has been directed to EFL anxiety among Jordanian students. More precisely, anxiety as a learner variable was not investigated on its own but among other variables such as motivation, self-esteem, motivational intensity and their relation to achievement (AlFalla, 2004) and gender differences (Alansari, 2006). Therefore, this study seeks to investigate anxiety in more details and shed some light on the role of anxiety on Jordanian students specially those who are

studying master degree of English language at YU.

2- Questions of the Study

This study aims to answer the following research questions:

- Q1:** To what extent do selected variables (age, socio-economic status, and speaking ability) predict foreign language anxiety levels among Jordanian master's students those are majoring in English language at Yarmouk University?
- Q2:** Which factors do students believe to contribute to anxiety?

3- Methodology

3.1. Research Design & Sampling

This study used quantitative research design to investigate anxiety in English language learning by 40 postgraduate students studying master's degree of English language at Yarmouk University for the academic year 2015/2016. According to Sekaran (2000), if a study population is composed of 45 only 40 students should be taken for the main study. This makes about 95 % of the overall population in this type of study. All the master's students selected for this study were bilingual students who speak Arabic and English languages.

3.2. Instrument

The researchers used questionnaire survey to achieve the study's objectives. Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale instrument (FLCAS) was developed by (Horwitz et al. 1986). The FLCAS is a 33-item measure based on an analysis of potential sources of anxiety in a language classroom as posited by Horwitz et al. (1986). This scale has been used in many studies of anxiety in foreign language learning and has found to be a highly reliable measure (Aida, 1994; Ganschow & Sparks, 1996; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1989; Price, 1991; Young, 1986). The FLCAS was based on an analysis of potential sources of anxiety in a language classroom, integrating three related anxieties (communication apprehension, test anxiety, and fear of negative evaluation) as posited by Horwitz et al. (1986).

3.3. Validity

Validity refers to whether the instrument that has been chosen is reported scores as valid (Creswell, 2008, p. 171). The researchers selected FLCAS as a researcher instrument because it had been proven to yield valid measurement of anxiety. According to Aida (1994, p.156), Horwitz et al., have attributed the inconclusive results of previous-research to the lack of a reliable and valid measure of anxiety specific to language learning. They conceptualize foreign language anxiety as “a distinct complex of self-perceptions, beliefs, feeling, and behaviors related to classroom language learning from the uniqueness of the language learning processes” (p.31). The Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) was developed by Horwitz in order to capture this specific anxiety reaction of learner to a foreign language learning setting. Horwitz et al., integrated three related anxieties to their conceptualization of foreign language anxiety, i.e., communication apprehension, test anxiety, and fear of negative evaluation. The FLCAS has proven to be a highly valid instrument to measure anxiety construct. In Aida's study on ninety-six Japanese students (1994), it “yielded internal consistency of .94 ($X = 96.7$ and $s.d. = 22.1$), using Cronbach's alpha coefficient. The reliability, mean, standard deviation, and range obtained in the study were very similar to those of Horwitz, who used students enrolled in an introductory Spanish class. The mean of the study was, 96.7, slightly higher than that of Horwitz's study, $X = 94.5$. It is understandable that students may feel more anxious in learning a non-Western, foreign language like Japanese (26) than in learning commonly taught Western languages such as Spanish.

3.4. Data Analysis

This section discusses how the quantitative data collected from FLCAS were analyzed. The researcher employed the SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) to analyze the quantitative data obtained from the respondents' questionnaire survey. Descriptive statistics were used to answer the research questions relevant to the respondents' anxiety levels. In computing the analysis of the quantitative data, the data items entered in the SPSS software were the different levels of anxiety and anxiety contributing factors.

4. Results

The first research question was to investigate the extent of the learner variables (age, socio-economic status, and speaking ability) to predict the language anxiety levels among the Jordanian students. For the first research question, three variables were believed to affect the anxiety level among the students. In each of these variables, the analysis is given by using frequency and percentages. Each of these variables is presented in separate table: tables one to three. (See Table 1 below).

Table 1
Distribution of Respondents According to Age

Age	Frequency	Percentage
25-29	13	33
30-35	18	45
36-46	9	22
Total	40	100

For the first variable (age), the highest frequency is 18 aged between (30-35) or 45 %, followed by 13 aged between (25-29) or 33%, and the least frequency is 9 aged between (36-40) or 22 %. It appears that those with the age between (30-35) years old were the most anxious students, while those with the age between (36-40) were the least anxious students. It might be argued that the more aged the respondents the more anxious they are. There is a possibility that, those who are 36 years old and above are more likely to be experienced teachers or instructors and have used English more frequently than fresh masters' students who have less exposure to English use at academic level. That is applicable too for the least age category (25-29) or 33% because at this age students may experience higher levels of anxiety. (See Table 2 below).

Table 2
Distribution of Respondents According to Socio-Economic Status

Socio Economic Status	Frequency	Percentage
Poor	18	45
Rich	22	55
Total	40	100

For the second variable (economic status), the highest frequency is 26 (poor) or 65 % while the lowest frequency is 14 (rich) or 35 %. The highest frequency can be explained from the high socio-economic background factor or families since they have been receiving better education or private schools. Private schools in Jordan teach English as a second language, especially in the capital, Amman. However, those who come from other places which are considered relatively poor regions follow the governments' education, which is usually of less quality and not effective. Though those students pass the government English tests, they still have problems with skills and communication abilities. Private schools pay special attention to the skills of the language, enhance communicative approach, and use new teaching methods and laboratories. On the other hand, poor students only learn the language in a very structured way and no actual use of the language takes place. (See Table 3 below).

Table 3
Distribution of Respondents According to Speaking Ability

Speaking Ability	Frequency	Percentage
Not good	1	3
Not very good	12	30
Somewhat good	23	57
Very good	4	10
Total	40	100

For the third variable (speaking ability), the highest frequency is 24 (not very good) or 60% while 11 (somewhat good) or 27 %, the lowest frequency is 1 (not good) or 3 % while 4 (very good) or 10 %. Those who received communicative instruction that enhances speaking abilities are less anxious in language situations where they are required to speak at academic levels. It can be assumed that those who are used to practice the language in similar situations or in schools have less anxiety levels than those who seldom use the language in communicative settings. The ability of speaking as shown (27 %) somewhat good and (10 %) very good can be traced back to the socio-economic status as mentioned earlier. Rich people send their children to private schools where the main emphasis is directed to enhance oral skills and mainly the speaking ability. However, poor people send their students to government schools where the main emphasis is on structure of the language and not to enhance communication or speaking ability. Its main emphasis is on grammar rules, translation and the structure mechanism.

For the first research question, the results of the three variables are presented and discussed. For the first variable (age), the highest frequency is 18 (aged between 30-35) or 45 %, followed by 13 (aged between 25-29) or 33%, and the least frequency is 9 (aged 36-40) or 22 %. It appears that those with the age between 30-35 years old were the most anxious students, while those with the age between 36-40 were the least anxious students. It might be argued that the more aged the respondents the more anxious they are. There is a possibility that, those who are 36 years old and above are more likely to be experienced teachers or instructors and have

used English more frequently than fresh master students who have less exposure to English use at academic level. That is applicable too for the least age category (25-29) or 33% because at this age students may experience higher levels of anxiety.

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For the second research question, the students' perceptions or beliefs of the most language anxiety provoking situations that contribute to anxiety was investigated. For that purpose, the researchers adopted Aida' questionnaires FLCAS (1994) which was conducted on Japanese students. The FLCAS questionnaire was originally designed to measure three anxiety factors, namely, fear of negative evaluation, test anxiety, and communication apprehension (Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope, 1986). However, the newly adapted FLCAS by Aida was to measure five anxiety factors: (1) speech anxiety and fear of negative evaluation (2) fear of failing the class, (3) comfortable in speaking with native language, (4) negative attitude toward English class, and (5) items not included in the factor solution. In this study the researchers display tables to show the mean, standard deviation frequency and percentage. Table 4 shows the factors of Speech Anxiety and Fear of negative Evaluation. This factor includes 18 items out of the 33 Likert scale form ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Table 4 shows the analysis of frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation for speech anxiety factor and fear of negative evaluation. Results show that most of the respondents stated strongly agree and agree with mean 3.53 and standard deviation 1.11. The analysis shows that 60 % or 24 respondents stated strongly agree and agree, while the remaining 25 % or 10 of the respondents neither agree nor disagree and 15 % or 6 of the respondents said strongly disagree and disagree.

Results of analysis show that there are 14 items that made the respondents strongly agree and agree compared to 18 items in the factor analysis based on the mean and standard deviation. Items are : *I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in my foreign language class* (mean 3.50, sd 1.54), *I tremble when I know that I'm going to be called on in language class* (mean 3.62, sd 1.25), *It frightens me when I don't understand what the teacher is saying in the foreign language* (mean 3.63, sd 1.33), *I keep thinking that the other students are better at language than I am* (mean 3.65, sd 1.17), *I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in language class* (mean 3.50, sd 1.36), *In language class, I can get so nervous I forget things I know* (mean 3.50, sd 1.06), *Item embarrasses me to volunteer answers in my language class* (mean 3.52, sd 1.26), *Even if I am well prepared for language class, I feel anxious about it* (mean 3.43, sd 1.15), *I can feel my heart pounding when I'm going to be called on in language class* (mean 3.60, sd 1.19), *The more I study for a language test, the most confused I get* (mean 3.50, sd 1.30), *I feel very self-conscious about speaking the foreign language in front of other students* (mean 3.50, sd 1.50), *I get nervous when I don't understand every word the language teacher says* (mean 3.50, sd 1.36), *I am afraid that the other students will laugh at me when I speak the foreign language* (mean 3.53, sd 1.38) and *I get nervous when the language teacher asks questions which I haven't prepared in advance* (mean 3.48, sd 1.17). Only 2 items the respondents stated strongly disagree and disagree. The items are *I am usually at ease during test in my language class* (mean 2.22, sd 1.31), and *I feel confident when I speak in foreign language class* (2. 3, sd 1.38), However, there are 2 items in the factor where the respondents stated neither agree nor disagree. *The items are I always feel that the other students speak the foreign language better than I do* (mean 3.30, sd 1.29) and *I get nervous and confused when I am speaking in my language class* (mean 3.30, sd 1.31). (See Table 4 below).

Table 4
Speech Anxiety and Fear of Negative Evaluation

N.	Items	1		2		3		4		5			
		f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%		
1	I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in my foreign language class Mean= 3.50 Sd= 1.54	9	22.5	1	2.5	4	10	13	32.5	13	32.5		
3	I tremble when I know that I'm going to be called on in language class Mean= 3.62 Sd= 1.25	3	7.5	6	15	5	12.5	15	37.5	11	27.5		
4	It frightens me when I don't understand what the teacher is saying in the foreign language Mean= 3.63 Sd= 1.33	3	7.5	8	20	3	7.5	13	32.5	13	32.5		
7	I keep thinking that the other students are better at language than I am Mean= 3.65 Sd= 1.17	2	5	6	15	6	15	16	40	10	25		
8	I am usually at ease during test in my language class Mean= 2.22 Sd= 1.31	16	40	11	27.5	5	12.5	5	12.5	3	7.5		
9	I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in language class Mean= 3.50 Sd= 1.36	5	12.5	6	15	3	7.5	16	40	10	25		
12	In language class, I can get so nervous I forget things I know Mean= 3.50 Sd= 1.06	2	5	6	15	7	17.5	20	50	5	12.5		
13	It embarrasses me to volunteer answers in my language class Mean= 3.53 Sd= 1.26	3	7.5	8	20	3	7.5	17	42.5	9	22.5		
16	Even if I am well prepared for language class, I feel anxious about it Mean= 3.43 Sd= 1.15	4	10	5	12.5	5	12.5	22	55	4	10		
18	I feel confident when I speak in foreign language class Mean= 2.03 Sd= 1.38	15	37.5	11	27.5	3	7.5	5	12.5	6	15		
20	I can feel my heart pounding when I'm going to be called on in language class Mean= 3.60 Sd= 1.19	2	5	8	20	3	7.5	18	45	9	22.5		
21	The more I study for a language test, the most confused I get Mean= 3.50 Sd= 1.30	4	10	7	17.5	3	7.5	17	42.5	9	22.5		
23	I always feel that the other students speak the foreign language better than I do Mean= 3.30 Sd= 1.29	5	12.5	7	17.5	5	12.5	17	42.5	6	15		
24	I feel very self-conscious about speaking the foreign language in front of other students Mean= 3.50 Sd= 1.50	7	17.5	4	10	5	12.5	10	25	14	35		
27	I get nervous and confused when I am speaking in my language class Mean= 3.30 Sd= 1.31	4	10	10	25	3	7.5	16	40	7	17.5		
29	I get nervous when I don't understand every word the language teacher says Mean= 3.50 Sd= 1.36	4	10	8	20	3	7.5	14	35	11	27.5		
31	I am afraid that the other students will laugh at me when I speak the foreign language Mean= 3.63 Sd= 1.21	2	5	8	20	3	7.5	17	42.5	10	25		
33	I get nervous when the language teacher asks questions which I haven't prepared in advance Mean= 3.48 Sd= 1.17	4	10	4	10	7	17.5	19	47.5	6	15		
	Speech Anxiety and Fear of Negative Evaluation Mean= 3.53 Sd= 1.11	1.0 – 2.4		2.5 – 3-4		3.5 – 5.0		6	15	10	25	24	60

On the other hand, table 5 shows the factor of Fear of Failing the Class. This factor includes 4 items out of the 33 Likert Scale form ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Table 5 shows the analysis of frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation for Fear of failing the class. (See table 5 below). The results

show that most respondents stated strongly agree and agree with mean total 3.51 and standard deviation 1.28. Results of the analysis show that 21 respondents 53 % stated strongly agree and agree. Other 8 respondents 20% stated neither agree nor disagree and 11 of the respondents 27% stated strongly disagree and disagree. Table 5 shows in detail the items included in the factor. The results of the analysis show that two out of the four items in the factor where the respondents stated strongly agree and agree. Among the items are *Foreign Language class moves so quickly I worry about getting left behind* with mean 3.50 and standard deviation 1.32 and *I feel more tense and nervous in my language class than in my other classes* with mean 3.53, sd 1.50. Only one item where the respondents neither agree or nor disagree with the statement *I worry about the consequences of failing my foreign language class* with mean (3.27, sd 1.43). However, there is only one item in the factor where the respondents stated strongly disagree and disagree. The item is *I do not feel pressure to prepare very well for language class* (mean 2.30, sd 1.34). (See Table 5 below).

Table 5
Fear of Failing the Class

		1		2		3		4		5	
		f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
10	I worry about the consequences of failing my foreign language class Mean= 3.27 Sd= 1.43	8	20	3	7.5	8	20	12	30	9	22.5
22	I don't feel pressure to prepare very well for language class Mean= 2.30 Sd= 1.34	13	32.5	8	20	8	20	8	20	3	7.5
25	Language class moves so quickly I worry about getting left behind Mean= 3.50 Sd= 1.32	3	7.5	8	20	7	17.5	10	25	12	30
26	I feel more tense and nervous in my language class than in my other classes. Mean= 3.53 Sd= 1.50	6	15	5	12.5	7	17.5	6	15	16	40
	Fear of Failing the Class Mean= 3.51 Sd= 1.28	10		1.0 – 2.4 27		8		2.5 – 3.4 20		3.5 – 5.0 22 53	

Table 6 shows the factor of Comfortable in Speaking with Native Language Speakers. This factor includes 3 items out of the 33 Likert Scale Form ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Table 6 shows the analysis of frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation for Comfortable in Speaking with Native Language Speakers. Results show that the respondents stated strongly disagree and disagree with the factor *comfortable in speaking with the native language speakers* with mean 2.31 and standard deviation 1.26. In terms of frequency and percentage for this factor, 28 of the respondents (70%) stated strongly disagree and disagree with this factor. The others stated neither agree nor disagree, 8 of the respondents (20%) and 4 of the respondents (10%) stated strongly agree and agree. Table 6 shows the following items: *I don't understand why some people get so upset over foreign language classes* (mean 2.15, sd 1, 33). The respondents stated strongly disagree and disagree with the item. Only one of the respondents stated neither disagree nor agree with the item, *I would not be nervous speaking the language with native speakers* (mean 2.45, sd 1.30). (See Table 6 below).

Table 6
Comfortable in Speaking with Native Language Speakers

		1		2		3		4		5	
		f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
11	I don't understand why some people get so upset over foreign language classes Mean= 2.15 Sd= 1.31	17	42.5	11	27.5	4	10	5	12.5	3	7.5
14	I would not be nervous speaking the language with native speakers Mean= 2.32 Sd= 1.33	12	30	16	40	4	10	3	7.5	5	12.5
32	I would probably feel comfortable around native speakers of the foreign language Mean= 2.45 Sd= 1.30	8	20	20	50	4	10	2	5	6	15
	Comfortable in Speaking with Native Language Mean= 2.31 Sd= 1.26	28		1.0 – 2.4 70		8		2.5 – 3.4 20		3.5 – 5.0 4 10	

Table 7 shows the factor of *Negative Attitudes towards the English Class*. This factor includes 2 items out of the 33 Likert Scale Form ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Table 7 shows the analysis of frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation for Negative Attitudes towards the English Class. For the

negative attitudes towards the English Class factor, this study found that the respondents stated strongly disagree and disagree with the general mean 2.21 and standard deviation 1.32. The frequency and percentage shows that 25 of the respondents (63%) stated strongly disagree and disagree. 11 respondents (27 %) stated agree and strongly agree with the factor. Only four respondents (10 %) stated neither disagree nor agree with the factor. Table 7 shows respondents stated strongly disagree and disagree for the following items, *I often feel like not going to my language class* with mean 2.35 and standard deviation 1.37 and only one of the respondents stated strongly agree and agree with the item *It would not bother me at all to take more foreign language classes*, with mean 3.8 and standard deviation 1.39. (See Table 7 below).

Table 7
Negative Attitudes toward the English Class

		1		2		3		4		5	
		f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
5	It wouldn't bother me at all to take more foreign language classes Mean= 3.8 Sd= 1.39	4	10	3	7.5	6	15	6	15	21	52.5
17	I often feel like not going to my language class Mean= 2.35 Sd= 1.37	13	32.5	14	35	4	10	4	10	5	12.5
	Negative Attitudes toward the English Class Mean= 2.21 Sd= 1.32	1.0 – 2.4 25		2.5 – 3-4 63		4		10		3.5 – 5.0 11 27	

Table 8 shows the factor of *Items not included in the factor*. This factor includes 2 items out of the 33 Likert Scale Form ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Table 11 shows the analysis of frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation for Items not included in the factor. The items not included in the factor also show that overall the respondents stated strongly agree and agree with the factor with general mean 3.50 and standard deviation 1.33. The frequency or percentage shows that 20 respondents (50 %) stated strongly agree and agree, the remaining respondents 12 respondents (30%) stated neither agree nor disagree, 8 respondents (20%) stated strongly disagree and disagree. This item shows that the respondents stated 2 out of the six items as strongly agree and agree. *During language class, I find myself thinking about things that have nothing to do with the course* with mean 3.43 and standard deviation 1.34, *I get upset when I don't understand what the teacher is correcting* with mean 3.53 and standard deviation 1.44, *I am afraid that my language teacher is ready to correct every mistake I make* with mean 3.50 and standard deviation 1.48, *I feel overwhelmed by the number of rules I have to learn to speak a foreign language* with mean 3.53 and standard deviation 1.39. There are two items where the respondents stated strongly agree nor disagree, *I don't worry about making mistakes in language class* with mean 3.22 and standard deviation 1.39, and *when I am on my way to language class I feel very sure and relaxed* with mean 3.38 and standard deviation 1.48. (See Table 8 below).

Table 8
Items Not Included in the Factor

		1		2		3		4		5	
		F	%	F	%	f	%	f	%	F	%
2	I don't worry about making mistakes in language class Mean= 3.22 Sd= 1.39	7	17.5	5	12.5	8	20	12	30	8	20
6	During language class, I find myself thinking about things that have nothing to do with the course Mean= 3.43 Sd= 1.34	3	7.5	9	22.5	8	20	8	20	12	30
15	I get upset when I don't understand what the teacher is correcting Mean= 3.53 Sd= 1.44	6	15	6	15	8	20	8	20	12	30
19	I'm afraid that my language teacher is ready to correct every mistake I make Mean= 3.17 Sd= 1.45	8	20	5	12.5	8	20	10	25	9	22.5
28	When I'm on my way to language class, I feel very sure and relaxed Mean= 3.38 Sd= 1.48	7	17.5	4	10	9	22.5	7	17.5	13	32.5
30	I feel overwhelmed by the number of rules I have to learn to speak a foreign language Mean= 3.53 Sd= 1.39	6	15	5	12.5	8	20	11	27.5	10	25
	Item Not Included in the Factor Solution Mean= 3.50 Sd= 1.33	1.0 – 2.4 8		2.0		2.5 – 3-4 12		30		3.5 – 5.0 20 50	

The second research question focuses on factors students believe contribute to anxiety, the results will be presented and discussed. This research question is divided into five factors which are speech anxiety and fear of negative evaluation, fear of failing the class, comfortable in speaking with native language, negative attitudes

toward language class, and items not included in the factor solution. According to the average of the results from the highest to the lowest, it is found that the factors that scored the highest mean are: *speech anxiety and fear of negative evaluation* (3.53), *fear of failing the class* (3.51), and *items not included in the factor* (3.50). The remaining two factors, which scored the lowest mean, are *comfortable in speaking with native language* (3.31), and *negative attitudes toward language class* (2.21). In discussing the results, the researcher will attempt to interpret the highest factors and the lowest factors separately, each in one group.

The factors that scored the highest mean appear to have consistent results because all of these factors are correlated and measure more or less the same construct of anxiety, but from different perspectives. For the *speech anxiety and fear of negative evaluation*, 24 respondents (60%) stated strongly agree and agree. For *fear of failing the class*, 21 respondents (53 %) stated strongly agree or agree. For the *items not included in the factor*, 20 respondents (50 %) stated strongly agree or agree with this factor. Arab Jordanian PhD students have high levels of anxiety in these three factors. For the speech anxiety factor, for example, 22 respondents (55 %) stated agree, and 4 respondents (10 %) stated strongly agree for the item *even if I am well prepared for language class, I feel anxious about it*. For the item in language class, *I can get so nervous I forget things I know*, 20 respondents (50 %) stated agree, and 5 respondents (12.5 %) stated strongly agree. For the factor fear of failing the class, 12 respondents (30 %) stated agree, and 9 respondents (22.5 %) stated strongly agree for the item *I worry about consequences of failing my foreign language class*. For the factor item not included in the factor, *during language class, I find myself thinking about things that have nothing to do with the course*, 12 respondents (30 %) stated agree, and 8 respondents (20 %) stated strongly agree.

According to the results, the perceptions and beliefs of the Jordanian master's students in YU that contribute to anxiety have been presented, and the overall results show that those students have high levels of anxiety in speaking English with respect to the five anxiety factors investigated. This high level of anxiety can be attributed to many factors. First, English in Jordan is taught as EFL setting and not as ESL. That means there are not many opportunities to use the language in communicative levels. Therefore, the students possess considerable ability in linguistic competence since they are still struggling with building up communicative competence. Speaking seems to be the most affecting factor that contributes to anxiety because students are not used to speak the language in Jordan. For the *fear of failing the class factor*, the results seem to be complementary to the first factor in the second research question, and come in line with the high of anxiety among the Jordanian students. This is reflected in the items investigated because most students expressed their fear of failing the language class. Also, in the factor item not included in the factor, the students showed high levels of anxiety as is represented in the items that the students do *worry about making mistakes, getting upset and teachers' correction*.

For the lowest factors, it would be better to discuss each of these factors separately as each one has its own specialty. For the factor *comfortable in speaking with the native language*, the mean is 2.31 which is lower than the mean in the three factors for the second research question. This means that students showed levels of anxiety less than the three factors with a difference of 1.22 in mean. It can be assumed that English at academic levels, especially at classroom environments, are more anxiety provoking and create feelings of being tested.

For the *negative attitudes toward the English* factor, it is found that the experiencing do not have negative attitudes towards going to English classes despite considerable degrees of anxiety in the three factors tested. This means that might the levels of anxiety the Jordanian PhD students experience do not hinder them from pursuing to learner English; the two items reflected that the students have a strong desire to attend English classes. That might be attributed to the idea that English language is a prerequisite subject in most academic fields, or more precisely, it is the language of instruction for most academic levels and universities, and students are still showing great attention to learn it.

4- Conclusion

The research questions of this study were (1) To what extent do selected variables (age, socio-economic status, and, speaking ability) predict foreign language anxiety levels among Jordanian master's students in Yarmouk University? And (2) What are the factors that students believe contribute to anxiety? This study has answered the two research questions, and thus helped in understanding anxiety experience by Jordanian students at YU. The results indicate that students have high levels of anxiety in general, and these levels of anxiety increase in speech, and fear of the class, and also in the items not included in factor solution. Although, the students are considered as highly anxious, they still have strong concern for learning English and keep going to these classes. In brief, it is found that anxiety can negatively affect the language learning experience in numerous ways and that reducing anxiety can enhance learner motivation (Horwitz, et al., 1986; Horwitz & Young, 1991; McIntyre, 1995a, 1995b; McIntyre & Gardner, 1989; Price, 1991; Samimy & Rardin, 1994; Young, 1990, 1990, 1991).

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